

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00 INR-07

NSAE-00 DODE-00 AID-05 IGA-01 ACDA-05 MC-02 IO-10

SAM-01 L-03 H-02 OMB-01 EUR-12 /085 W

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P 130912Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5092

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, JO, US

SUBJECT: CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS ON ARMS SALES TO JORDAN

REF: STATE 164780

1. THERE ARE SEVERAL POINTS WHICH WE BELIEVE SHOULD BE BROUGHT TO YOUR ATTENTION. WE APOLOGIZE IF THEY ARE DUPLICATIVE OF WHAT YOU ALREADY KNOW.

2. FYI ONLY: THE KING, THE PRIME MINISTER, AND MOST JORDANIANS, INCLUDING THE MILITARY, BELIEVE THERE HAS BEEN A COMMITMENT AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL IN THE U.S.G. TO PROVIDE JORDAN WITH A MODERN AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM. THEY ARE DEEPLY CONCERNED THAT THERE IS AN ORGANIZED EFFORT IN THE CONGRESS TO BLOCK THIS. THEIR CONCLUSION IS THAT THEIR WESTERN NEIGHBOR IS BEHIND THIS EFFORT FOR TWO REASONS. (A) THEY WISH TO KEEP JORDAN DEFENCELESS AS FAR AS AIR ATTACK IS CONCERNED, POSSIBLY HOPING TO ISOLATE IT IN THE EVENT OF ANOTHER CONFLICT, TO REDUCE ANY POTENTIAL LOSSES IF JORDAN IS ATTACKED, OR ALTERNATIVELY TO PAVE THE WAY FOR SOME SORT OF LIGHT-ENING THRUST AGAINST THE ARABS. (B) THEY WISH TO ATTEMPT TO USE THIS AS LEVERAGE TO SEEK POSITIVE U.S. DECISIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE REASSESSMENT AND ON PROVISION OF NEW SOPHISTICATED WEAPONS SYSTEMS. END FYI ONLY.

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3. JORDANIANS READ WITH INTEREST AND WERE PLEASED WITH THE EARLIER GENERAL REPLY TO THE ROSENTHAL RESOLUTION QUESTIONS. THE ONLY ONE THEY TRIPPED OVER WAS NUMBER 19, AND AFTER THEIR INITIAL SURPRISE, THEY BELIEVE THE QUESTION OF THE AGENT'S FEE FOR COMMISSION HAS BEEN SATISFACTORILY SORTED OUT HERE. THEY ARE ANXIOUS TO HAVE THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH TAKE A FORWARD POSITION WITH THE CONGRESS ON JORDAN'S DETERMINATION TO PROCEED WITH THE SALE WITHOUT ANY COMMISSION. THEY BELIEVE THIS NOT ONLY RESOLVES THE ISSUE, BUT SHOULD REBOUND TO THE ADVANTAGE OF JORDAN.

4. THEY BELIEVE THAT IN ORDER TO CONTINUE TO BE MODERATE IN THE MIDDLE EASTERN CONTEXT THEY MUST BE STRONG ENOUGH TO PROVIDE FOR THEIR OWN DEFENSE. THEY CHARACTERIZE THE SALE OF REDEYE, VULCAN AND HAWK AS THE SALE OF A DEFENSIVE WEAPONS SYSTEM. TO THEM THE PRESS REPORTS FROM ISRAEL AND ELSEWHERE THAT HAWK COULD BE USED TO BOMBARD JERUSALEM, TEL AVIV, AND OTHER POPULATION CENTERS IS NOT ONLY FAR-FETCHED BUT ALSO LUDICROUS. THEY HAVE TRADITIONALLY ACCEPTED ISRAEL'S CONTINUING EXISTENCE AND SINCE 1967 HAVE SHOWN THE GREATEST CONCERN ABOUT PARTICIPATING IN ANY ATTACK ON ISRAEL.

5. IN SPITE OF THE PRESS STORIES ABOUT JOINT MILITARY COMMAND SWITH SYRIA AND BURGEONING DEFENSIVE PREPARATIONS ALONG HHE JORDAN VALLEY (ALL OF WHICH WE BELIEVE HAVE BEEN SET IN PROPER PERSPECTIVE BY REPORTING FROM THIS EMBASSY), THE JORDANIANS HAVE NOT CHANGED THEIR OFFICIAL ATTITUDE OR POSTURE AGAINST PARTICIPATING IN AN ATTACK AGAINST ISRAEL. HOWEVER, THEY REMAIN READY AT ALL TIMES TO DEFEND THEMSELVES. THIS MEANS BOTH AGAINST ATTACKS FROM THE WEST AS WELL AS THE NORTH AND EAST (SYRIA AND IRAQ).

6. THE JORDANIANS BELIEVE, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF LEGANON, THAT THEY ARE THE ONLY COUNTRY IN THE MIDDLE EAST WITHOUT ANY AIR DEFENSE. INDEED THE PRESENCE OF FEDAYEEN AND SYRIAN CONTROLLED SA-7 MISSILES IN

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5093

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LEBANON MAKES THEM INFERIOR TO THAT SMALL COUNTRY
IN THIS REGARD. THEY DO NOT WISH TO BE UNDER
EITHER ISRAELI OR ARAB PRESSURES BECAUSE OF THIS WEAKNESS.
THE ARABS HAVE PROVIDED THEM SIGNIFICANT FUNDS TO
IMPROVE THEIR POSTURE. THE EMBASSY HAS NO DOUBT THAT
IF US. WEAPONS IN RESONABLE QUANTITIES ARE DENIED
TO THEM, THEY WILL GO TO SYRIA FOR SOVIET WEAPONS, TO
EUROPE FOR SIMILAR EQUIPMENT, AND IF NECESSARY
DIRECTLY TO THE SOVIETS.

7. WE BELIEVE THE PROVISION OF A REASONABLE SYSTEM
OF AIR DEFENSE TO JORDAN BY THE U.S. THROUGH A SALE
SUPPORTED BY ARAB OIL MONEY MAKES SENSE FOR PEACE AND
STABILITY IN THE AREA AND ALSO SERVES THE INTERSTS
OF THE STATE IN THE REGION, INCLUDING ISRAEL, BECAUSE:
(A) A MODERATE JORDAN HELPS TO INSURE TRANQUILITY
ON ISRAEL'S LONGEST LAND BORDER: (B) THE PROVISION
OF A SYSTEM DOES NOT UPSET THE MILITARY BALANCE IN
THE AREA, BUT RATHER PRESERVES IT; (C) IN ORDER FOR
JORDAN TO CONTINUE ON A MODERATE COURSE WITH RESPECT
TO NETOTIATIONS, RECOGNITION OF ISRAEL'S RIGHT TO
EXIST, AND OTHER PRINCIPAL ELEMENTS OF A PEACE
IN THE MIDDLE EAST, IT MUST HAVE THE STRENGTH TO
DEFEND ITSELF AND PRESERVE THE CONFIDENCE OF ITS
PEOPLE AND ITS MILITARY; (D) IT WOULD NOT BE IN THE
INTEREST OF THE U.S. OR OF PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

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TO SEE AN INCREASING SPREAD OF RADICAL ARAB REGIMES
IN THE REGION, INCLUDING THE ABSORPTION BY IRAQ OR

SYRIA OR THE PLO OF PRESENT-DAY JORDAN; (E) JORDAN SERVES AS A USEFUL BUFFER TO THE NORTH OF SAUDI ARABIA AGAINST THE SAME SORT OF INFLUENCE; AND (F) IT IS NOT IN U.S. OR ISRAELI INTEREST IN THE MIDDLE EAST TO SEE SOVIET WEAPONS IN JORDAN WITH WHAT WE ASSUME WOULD BE THE REQUIRED PRESENCE OF A NUMBER OF SOVIET ADVISORS TO TEACH THEIR USE.

8. FINALLY, WE ASSUME THAT YOU WILL MAKE CLEAR TO THE CONGRESS THE EXTENSIVE AMOUNT OF STUDY WHICH THE SALES PROPOSALS HAVE BEEN GIVEN IN THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH WITH FULL CONSIDERATION OF ALL OF THE PROS AND CONS WHICH ARE ATTACHED TO THEM. WHILE IT MIGHT BE TOO STRONG TO SAY THAT OUR CONTINUING GOOD RELATIONS WITH JORDAN (AND KING HUSSEIN) AND ITS FUTURE AS A MODERATE AND FRIENDLY STATE IN THE MIDDLE EAST RIDE ENTIRELY ON THIS QUESTION, TO A VERY SIGNIFICANT DEGREE IT WOULD BOT BE STRETCHING THE TRUTH TO SAY THAT WHAT THE CONGRESS DOES IN THIS CASE WILL REPRESENT A LANDMARK IN OUR FUTURE RELATIONSHIP TO JORDAN.

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